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WAR BREEDS WAR

by William Henry Chamberlin

Wars increase in horror and destructiveness in a kind of geometrical progression.

World War I took more lives and destroyed more wealth than the long cycle of Napoleonic Wars. World War II wrought infinitely more havoc than World War I. Not only was the death toll, especially among civilians, much higher, not only was irreparable destruction inflicted upon the cultural treasures of Europe, but the aftermath of war has witnessed unparalleled acts of cold-blooded ferocity. Among these may be noted the killing of leaders of the vanquished, after judgments by inevitably prejudiced and partial victors' courts; the uprooting of many millions of human beings from their homes under circumstances of great brutality; the enslavement of war prisoners long after the end of hostilities; the wholesale looting of private property.

It is not surprising that the horror of modern warfare, during both the great wars of our time, inspired the hope that some effective machinery for the prevention of war could be devised. These hopes gave birth to the League of Nations in 1919, to the United Nations in 1945. The League of Nations faded away under the impact of World War II. Its last action of any consequence was the expulsion of the Soviet Union from membership for unprovoked aggression against Finland.

There is little likelihood that the United Nations, as an organization, will function any more effectively in preventing a third World War. It is already painfully evident that before the United Nations can take positive action on many subjects it must find means of circumventing and by-passing its own Charter.

The causes of the failure of the League and of the United Nations are somewhat different, although a hard core of obstructive nationalism can be found in both cases. The League started under the handicap of American and Russian nonmembership. It could perhaps have overcome this handicap and fulfilled a useful mission if it had become the nucleus of a united Europe. But national antagonisms were too stubborn to be resolved and the League declined steadily in power and prestige as Japan, Germany and Italy withdrew from membership.

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Optimists were quick to point out that the United States and the Soviet Union were charter members of the United Nations. But that body has become increasingly an instrument for registering discord, rather than concord. The field of American-Soviet disagreement has widened until the expression "cold war" is used by sober publicists in describing the situation. The Soviet veto has blocked any United Nations action on such obvious threats to peace as the disturbance along the Greek northern frontier and the unnatural division of Korea.

II

Both the great international conflicts of our generation have driven home the harsh lesson that global wars tend to breed more wars, rather than peace. If some injustices are redressed, prevented or avenged, new injustices are invariably committed in the heat of victory.

It was reckoned during the Versailles Conference of 1919 that seventeen new wars were going on at the very time the harassed delegates of the victorious Powers were seeking some means of outlawing war as an instrument of national policy. Most of these new wars, to be sure, were on a rather small scale. They came to an end as intervention in Russia ceased and the Soviet Government desisted from its attempts to spread Communism westward by armed force. However, a legacy of hatred and dissatisfaction was left and was not the least of the factors that brought Hitler to power.

At the present time, thirty-one months after the Japanese surrender, five wars are going on. The most serious is the civil war in China, in which the Nationalist Government is in danger of losing not only Manchuria but a great part of North China to the Communists. Smaller in the number of men engaged, but serious in its international implications, is the revolt of the Communist guerrillas in Greece.

A third war, which has already cost nearly two thousand lives and which possesses explosive possibilities of expansion, is the Jewish-Arab strife in Palestine. This is not, like the Chinese and Greek civil wars, directly linked up with the American-Soviet antagonism which is the major political problem of the post-war world. But the conflict in Palestine is, to some extent, an outgrowth of World War II conditions, of the desire of uprooted Jews in Europe for an asylum, and of the marked growth of Arab national feeling.

The Hindu-Moslem skirmishing in Kashmir suggests a small flame in dangerous proximity to a powder magazine. For communal hatred in India has been formidably inflamed by the fearful cruelties of which all groups have been guilty in the Punjab. And India's saint and supreme pacifier, Gandhi, has been removed by an assassin's bullet.

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If the Netherlands-Indonesian skirmishing is ended, there still remains the colonial war which the French are waging with little publicity in Indo-China. It is estimated that this fifth war is eating up a sum equivalent to interim aid which France is now receiving from the United States.

III

It is important to ask why war persistently breeds war, in spite of the unquestioned preference of the great majority of individual human beings for peace. Perhaps the most obvious reason is that the terrible weapon of warfare in modern times has been wielded by governments with progressive lack of foresight and sense of responsibility. It seems as though the age of great statesmanship has entirely disappeared.

The wars of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries were in general fought for limited objectives and with shrewd appreciation of the fact that the enemy of today might be the ally of tomorrow and vice versa. A Pitt or a Palmerston, a Talleyrand or a Metternich, a Bismarck or a Cavour would have laughed at the naive suggestion that nations could be divided into "peace-loving" sheep and aggressor goats. Wars were limited liability enterprises, not supposedly holy crusades.

The long cycle of wars unloosed by the French Revolution and carried on under Napoleon created the greatest convulsion in European history, prior to World War I. Public opinion in the victorious countries was sincerely convinced of Napoleon's primary responsibility. But the great Corsican adventurer got off with administrative exile. There was no equivalent of the Nuremberg tribunal in 1815. No Morgenthau arose with a scheme to turn France into an economic desert. The rulers and statesmen who figured prominently in the Congress of Vienna displayed a shrewd common sense that added up to practical humanity.

Perhaps the spread of literacy and of the sense of mass participation in political decisions, desirable as these developments may be on other grounds, has limited the possibilities of healing and constructive statesmanship. The statesmen at Versailles were prisoners of their own Frankenstein monster of propaganda, which represented the enemy as the sum of everything villainous and called for retribution on a scale beyond any possibility of fulfillment. Moreover, enlightened peace programs like Wilson's Fourteen Points and the Atlantic Charter tend to melt away amid the fierce passions of the struggle and the supposed exigencies of practical politics.

Wars cast the shadows of future wars before them. The most important political consequence of World War I was the rise of totalitarian

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dictatorships, more predisposed to war than to peace. During World War II, American diplomacy devoted itself with fanatical energy to the suicidal task of tearing down all barriers to the stark clash of interests between America and the Soviet Union. This developing clash is now seen as the most important consequence of World War II.

IV

That a third World War would be a disaster for the entire human race is too obvious to require argumentative demonstration. But it is not easy to suggest workable terms of peace for the cold war that is now in course of development. It would be theoretically possible for the United States to disarm unilaterally and surrender unconditionally, point by point. But, human nature in general and American nature in particular being what they are, such a program may be ruled out as unworkable, even if it were morally and politically desirable.

Neither would a policy of appeasement, yielding and retreat on any specific issue, on Germany or Greece, Turkey or Korea, Czechoslovakia, Finland or Italy, bring any lasting solution. For experience offers unanswerable proof that the Soviet Government has a very one-sided conception of give-and-take. Stalin fully lives up to Gibbon's stately characterization of the Roman Emperor, Septimius Severus:

> "He promised only to betray, he flattered only to ruin; and, however he might occasionally bind himself by oaths and treaties, his conscience, obsequious to his interest, always released him from the inconvenient obligation."

The Soviet leaders are convinced, as an article of dogmatic faith, that permanent peaceful co-existence with the non-Communist world is impossible. And they are driven forward by a kind of dynamic of fear, not fear of American military attack, but of the mere existence of any stable and prosperous non-Communist societies on their frontiers.

Probably the most realistic approach to the problem of "getting along" with Russia is to take some diplomatic risks on the assumption that the Soviet Union, for several years at least, will not be in a position to fight a large-scale aggressive war. It follows as a corollary that we must give reasonable co-operation to genuine West European attempts to achieve self-help. An effective union of at least some of the European countries which are outside the Soviet orbit would help to relieve the chronic strain of our present position as the sole major check on unlimited Soviet expansion.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. V, NO. 10

By Frank C. Hanighen March 10, 1948

On September 2, 1945, aboard the U.S.S. Missouri, in Tokyo Bay, General Douglas MacArthur formally received the surrender of the Japanese. In his remarks on that occasion, he urged a peace without "malice". Also, he said, "Men since the beginning of time have sought peace. Various methods through the ages have attempted to devise an international process to prevent or settle disputes between nations. From the very start workable methods were found in so far as individual citizens were concerned, but the mechanics of an instrumentality of larger international scope have never been successful. Military alliance, balances of power, League of Nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war.

"The utter destructiveness of war now blots out this alternative. We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advance in science, art, literature and all material and cultural developments of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh."

Since that day the General has labored in this spirit. He has probably not done as well as his enthusiastic admirers claim; and Japan still lives precariously after two and a half years of his governorship. But, he has given the Japanese self-government; he has tried to modify the ruthlessness of the settlement which the bureaucrats and diplomats have planned; and his wide popularity among the Japanese is significant. We have heard no banzais from the Germans for General Clay.

But Japan, like Germany, is far away from Washington. On March 8, MacArthur threw his hat into the ring. Voices of approval were raised on Capitol Hill, but they were few and scattered. Under the Dome, the problem of the spirit and the flesh seemed a bit metaphysical. The Democrats were in a state of unhappy absorption with their divided Party; and Republicans, feeling "it's in the bag", said that military glamour wasn't needed now to win. Some thought the procession had left the General far behind. It would be rash, however, in the present reeling kaleidoscope of our politics, to dismiss the General completely. If he still possesses the vision he displayed on the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay, his listeners may prove to be legion; and even the politicos may have to lend an ear.

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On March 4, 1948, General MacArthur gave a statement on the Far Eastern situation to a Congressional committee, the purport of which was sharply at variance with the views of Secretary Marshall. A day later, General Wedemeyer followed suit. The persuasive and expert opinions of these two military leaders may prove convincing to those of the American people who have noted them. If so, it will be interesting to see if Marshall loses some of his popular prestige. Observers have noted for some time that, while Marshall seems to enjoy the esteem of the mass of people, his popularity on Capitol Hill has declined sharply. Often there is a time lag between the attitudes of Members of Congress and their constituents. Sooner or later, the people catch up.

If this should prove to be the case with regard to Marshall, then the results may hasten the present degringolade of the Truman Administration. If Truman is to recover lost ground, it will be by the conduct of foreign affairs -- such is the

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opinion of many observers. Much confidence has hitherto been placed in Marshall's ability to perform this task. Obviously if confidence in him fades, degringolade may become debacle.

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The foreign stories on the front pages deal with Finland, Czechoslovakia, Vienna, Indo-China, and they continue for days -- in the newspaper way. But rarely does a front page piece touch on Italy. The reason is that there is little sensational news from that country -- no strikes, riots, cabinet crises, etc. The Communists in Italy have adopted a strategy of temporary "moderation". Even when Premier de Gasperi said that there was danger of a Communist coup, the statement got only a "stick" in the papers. Yet there is no area which causes the U. S. Government so much concern these days as Italy. One day, we feel, newspaper readers are going to be presented with an unpleasant surprise.

A prominent British journalist dropped in the other day. He is gloomily convinced that the Communists will make such gains in the crucial April 19 elections that they will have complete control of Italy before the year is out. "Before many months", he said, "we'll probably see the barbarians again sacking Rome". If the Communists win 40 per cent of the seats in the April election, they will stand a good chance of taking over the Government, in the opinion of well-informed observers just returned from Italy. Government experts share this fear and say that Communist success in Italy will have dangerous effects on the whole Mediterranean area. Plans to try to turn the tide are under consideration here. No information is available, but all observers are watching for some significant move from Washington.

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The following factors of the tangled Palestine situation deserve to be reported -- although they point to no early amelioration of the Holy Land's plight:

(1) The Zionists. It is feared that the extremist wing of the Jewish Agency may force the Agency leaders to stage a coup de'etat, establishment of a Jewish Palestine State by force. The Zionist leaders might logically be expected to wait until the British leave Palestine on May 15 before taking such action. But the extremists are restless and might force the Agency's hand earlier. It is believed that the extremist Irgun, by its amalgamation with the moderate Haganah, will influence the combined forces toward an extremist policy rather than vice versa.

(2) The British. The very "tough" warning issued by the British command last week to the Agency doubtless gave some satisfaction to British home opinion. Some observers describe the British attitude as tinged with "vengeance".

(3) Soviet Russia. Officialdom here does not, as do others, regard the Russian attitude as mysterious. Russia, as usual, is intent on causing Washington as much trouble as possible.

(4) The Arabs. Arab leaders are feeling cocky, but willing to conciliate. They are willing to make a deal, because they fear the incursion of Russia into the Near East affairs. They are prepared to offer to the Zionists the following plan: a federal Arab State in Palestine, with autonomy for Jewish areas -- and 150,000 Jewish immigrants (but no more) permitted in the next two years.

(5) The United States. It is semi-officially suggested that a UN trusteeship provides the best temporary solution for the problem; it might be acceptable to both Arabs and Jews and presumably would serve as a breather.

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Government economists are urging a provision in the ERP bill to ensure raw materials for the United States. They want a firm commitment on the part of the European colonial Powers to accord the same rights and privileges to American firms

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in colonial areas as to their own nationals. Only by this method, they say, will the full capacity of the rich raw material reserves in colonial areas be tapped; and American enterprise is the only ready instrument to carry out this exploitation.

These experts are in no sense of the word imperialists or advocates of predatory interests. They are, however, very much impressed with America's lack of a large number of essential materials. This situation has arisen partly through exhaustion of our mineral reserves (i.e., copper, lead, etc.) and partly through the need for certain other raw materials, such as columbite, corundum, tantalite, industrial diamonds and tungsten. These are in short supply.

Experts insist that our needs for such materials will never be filled if their production is left to European colonial Powers. Although we have appropriated large sums for stock-piling strategic raw materials, we have not been able to buy them in sufficient quantities because production is insufficient. They say the comparatively low production is due to a number of factors: cartels, which keep production low and prices high; inadequate financial resources of European colonial Powers today; lack of industrial enterprise among nationals of these Powers; European restrictions on American capital and industry which block attempts of our firms to exploit colonial resources.

It is pointed out that while most of our thinking is concentrated on Europe and the Marshall plan, our industry depends to only a small extent on Europe and Russia for raw materials. On the other hand, about half the raw materials we need now come from Africa and Asia, with most of the remainder from the Americas. The increasing dependence, in this respect, on Africa is particularly stressed.

Therefore, these experts propose that the following provision be included in the ERP measure: that every recipient of aid under ERP must open its colonial reserves of raw materials to American companies on equal terms with its own nationals; and that it must not impose any export tax on subsequent production greater than that on similar shipments to the United States. Other experts perceive loopholes in such a provision. But they agree that the principle is sound and its implementation should be thoroughly explored and worked out.

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The passions of the "internationalist vs. isolationalist" debate of 1939-41 have long since died down, although occasionally someone -- President Truman, for instance, in his Jackson Day dinner speech -- seeks to rekindle them. It certainly would be incorrect to say that the old feud has been amicably settled. But there are some surprising signs. An observer in 1941 would never believe that he would some day see Senator Wheeler praised by one of the principal internationalists. Such, however, is the case, as may be seen in the following excerpt from a letter from Clarence Streit, exponent of Federal Union, to the Washington Post (March 6):

"The rising tide of United States' talk in favor of a European federation should make Burton K. Wheeler . . . very happy indeed. Several years before Governor Dewey, Mr. Wheeler was urging European union. When Congress was going overwhelmingly for the Fulbright and Connally resolutions on world organization, Senator Wheeler was talking European union. He was talking it even before that, when no one else in the United States of his stature was advocating it.

"Mr. Churchill and others now advocate Western European union as a defense against Soviet Russia. In the years when they were paying no mean tributes to the Kremlin, Senator Wheeler left no doubt that he deemed Moscow a menace to freedom against which Western Europe should federate. . . . He made it clear that he had in mind a federal government, such as that of the United States. Most of the United States internationalists who are now urging European rather than transatlantic union have neglected, no doubt, to think this policy through. But if they still favor it, fairness should suggest to them that they apologize to Mr. Wheeler for their criticisms of him and recognize him as their first prophet."

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Book Events

Our New Masters, by Colm Brogan. London: Hollis and Carter. Price not indicated.
Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

Mr. Brogan, a man of considerable wit, writing as I suppose in the Tory interest, attacks the British Labour Party with urbane malice and corrosive epigram. His general thesis is that the painful difficulties and dilemmas of Mr. Attlee's government are merely the logical fruits of the propaganda which the Party has been disseminating for a full generation. Mr. Brogan elaborates his thesis with deft and often merciless sketches of the political careers of the principal leaders of the government. He is harsh enough, God knows, with the real trades-unionists, those elder war horses of the Party who have actually sprung from the ranks of Labour, and some of whom, he says, "had sprung very early and very far". His hostility to Mr. Herbert Morrison, now suspected by his colleagues of being about to follow the path of the late Ramsay MacDonald, is tempered by a certain respect for a sinner who, perceiving the judgment to be close at hand, has the good sense to repent his ways; and for Mr. Ernest Bevin, as the one Labour statesman who understands the difference between food and calories (and as the man who having met Socialism face to face in the visages of the Messrs. Molotov, Gromyko and Vishinsky recoiled from what he saw there), Mr. Brogan has almost an affection. All his choicer venoms are reserved for the bourgeois intellectuals of the Party, the men whose experience of manual labor "has been confined to bedding the roses or swinging a driver", the teachers, journalists, clergymen, lawyers and company directors who entered the Party late and captured it quickly. So that when the victorious Labour parliament assembled in 1946, "for every two of the horny-handed there were three of the horny-spectacled".

Thus we have Mr. Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister, a well-bred revolutionary, who in reviewing his past political utterances remains persuaded that "all would have been well if only the whole of mankind had agreed with him". But, observed Mr. Brogan, the workers have agreed so heartily with Mr. Attlee that they cannot now see the necessity of working harder than ever, just because the cause of Socialism has triumphed in Great Britain. Thus Mr. Attlee must presently make up his mind whether to govern or to retire. Mr. Brogan recalls that in his earlier days, before he had felt the responsibilities of power, Mr. Attlee spoke of the necessity of adopting "the strong points of the Russian system and applying them to Britain"; but Mr. Brogan surmises that a man of sterner and less theoretic mind than Mr. Attlee's will be needed for this task. Presumably, it will not be Sir Stafford Cripps, the brilliant and devoted Christian revolutionary, who understands everything but human nature and politics; for "wherever Sir Stafford has tried to increase wealth and happiness", says Mr. Brogan with artful sigh, "the grass never grows again". Neither is it likely to be Mr. Strachey, the avatar of the Left Book Clubs and the New Statesman leaders, whose task it now is to prove to his countrymen by science and statistics in a suave Etonian accent that the less food they get the better fed they are. Nor, presumably, will the totalitarian tyrant envisaged by Mr. Churchill be the cheerful Chancellor, Dr. Dalton, who told the miners that if they would only produce enough coal people might stop criticizing the government for having nationalized the mines. Even less is it likely to be some trades-union demagogue like Mr. Shinwell "whose method of dealing with facts is to put the most important facts firmly behind him and to look the rest square in the face"; nor Mr. Aneurin Bevan, whose "record of ineptitude is less massive than Mr. Shinwell's, but of course he is the younger man". Mr. Brogan does not tell us where his own bets have been placed; but the reader is permitted to infer that it is about even money between the Communists and Sir Oswald Mosley.

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